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SUBJECT: Coral Triangle Summit: Leaders Strengthen Commitments

REF: BANGKOK 0709

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11. Summary: Leaders from the six Coral Triangle countries (CT6) officially launched the Coral Triangle Initiative (CTI) on May 15. The CTI, first proposed by President Yudhoyono in 2007, highlights both Indonesia's leadership and the importance of a multilateral approach to issues that transcend national borders: marine conservation, food security, climate change adaptation. During this first CTI Summit in Manado, Indonesia, the CT6 leaders pledged additional financial resources and/or announced new national-level actions to support the CTI. The CT6 leaders committed to enhance cooperation and mobilize sustainable financing for the effective implementation of the CTI. They expressed appreciation to CTI Development Partners, including the U.S. and Australia. USAID announced \$1.6 million in additional CTI funding for the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration to conduct capacity building efforts. Australia also announced a "down payment" of \$2 million in support of CTI. End Summary.

Background: The Coral Triangle Initiative and Summit

12. The "Coral Triangle" includes Indonesia, Malaysia, Papua New Guinea (PNG), the Philippines, Timor Leste, and the Solomon Islands. This 5.7 million square km area has the highest marine biodiversity on earth and provides livelihoods for approximately 120 million people. The area is threatened by over- and destructive fishing, land- and sea-based pollution, and climate change. First proposed in August 2007 by Indonesian President Yudhoyono, the CT6 agreed in December 2007 to collaborate on this multilateral partnership. The CTI is a transformative regional initiative with the potential to generate significant benefits across the region and globally, including supporting sustainable economic development, food security, and the conservation of globally significant marine resources. The CTI builds on more than three decades of U.S. investment in coastal resource management, fisheries, and marine-protected area (MPA) work in the region.

13. The CTI Summit was the finale of the World Ocean Conference (WOC) hosted by Indonesia, May 11-15. Preparatory CTI meetings and side-events took place concurrently with the WOC (septel). The U.S. delegation to the WOC and CTI meetings (and the U.S. contributions to CTI) dominated media coverage throughout the week, earning front-page placement in many newspapers.

Additional \$1.6 Million from USG for CTI

¶4. USAID announced \$1.6 million in CTI funding for the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) to conduct regional and national capacity building efforts in sustainable fisheries, coastal community adaptation to climate change and MPA management -- starting with Indonesia. This is in addition to the existing, approximately \$40 million USG commitment to CTI. Other USG programs also support the goals of the CTI, including USAID's Global Conservation Program and its bilateral coastal-marine management programs in the Philippines and Indonesia.

#### Senior Officials and Ministerial Meetings

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¶5. Preparatory meetings for the Senior Officials were held on May 12 and 13 to finalize the CTI Leaders Declaration, consider coordination and financial mechanisms, and prepare for the Summit. USAID's Regional Development Mission for Asia was requested to present a summary of the status of USG CTI programs, including funding, at these otherwise closed meetings. The officials' recommendations were reviewed during a brief Ministerial Preparatory Meeting on May 13, followed by a CTI Ministerial Dinner to which high ranking partners were also invited.

#### CTI Leaders Summit

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¶6. All CT6 leaders emphasized the significance of their collaboration and the need to work regionally -- with support channeled through government mechanisms and toward identified priorities. Their Leaders' Declaration calls for accelerated and collaborative action, affirms the Ministerial Statement signed in Port Moresby, PNG on March 10, 2009, adopts the CTI Regional Plan of Action (RPOA), and calls for the establishment of a permanent Secretariat (reftel).

¶7. The Summit's host, Indonesia President Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono,

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pledged \$5 million for Indonesia's CTI programs as well as a doubling of the national CTI budget within three years. He committed to implementing the RPOA and offered to host the CTI Regional Secretariat in Indonesia, with full financial support for the day-to-day operations of the Secretariat. Yudhoyono also announced that a national committee of ministers will meet annually and discuss progress of the CTI. In addition, Yudhoyono also announced the establishment of the 4.5-million hectare Savu Sea National Marine Fisheries Sanctuary bordering Timor Leste, which takes Indonesia beyond its target of 10 million hectares of MPAs by ¶2010. He reiterated Indonesia's target of 20 million hectares of MPAs by 2020, all of which would be sustainably financed and properly managed. In addition, Yudhoyono stated he had instructed his ministers to work with other CT6 ministers to prepare unified positions on climate change adaptation for the climate talks in Copenhagen this December.

¶8. Philippines President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo announced \$5 million toward the Philippine national efforts under CTI, primarily to manage important species and establish MPAs. She highlighted efforts to manage priority seascapes using government-NGO partnerships and the need to expand opportunities to engage the private sector. She noted efforts to strengthen bilateral activities with PNG and the Solomon Islands on fisheries as well as the need to manage the live reef food fish trade.

¶9. Timor Leste President Jose Ramos-Horta emphasized the need to use the oceans in a more sustainable way. He called for the establishment of a regional task force on maritime security and fisheries enforcement, noting that illegal fishing results in significant financial loss to a small and poor state like Timor Leste.

¶10. PNG Prime Minister Sir Michael Somare announced Cabinet approval of \$2 million for PNG's CTI activities. He emphasized the need to strengthen human capacity and for partners to transfer appropriate technology, in particular to address climate change and land-based sources of pollution.

¶11. Solomon Islands Prime Minister Derek Sikua announced the

establishment of a staffed CTI unit within the Ministry of Environment, Conservation and Meteorology and the creation of a National Coordination Committee (NCC) that includes representatives from relevant ministries and NGOs. His cabinet has also endorsed the National Plan of Action (NPoA) with a commitment to mainstream CTI activities into the 2010 budget. They will specifically fund a major national activity on building the resilience and adaptive capacity of small low-lying outer islands to face the impacts of climate change.

¶12. Malaysia Prime Minister Yab Dato'Sri Mohd Najib Tun Abdul Razak emphasized the need for more ocean research at a regional level and sustainable management of ecosystems. He noted the importance of working through the CT6 based on national priorities and existing initiatives and the recognition of local communities and culture in integrating interventions. The Prime Minister highlighted one priority project, the Prime Scientific Sailing Expedition 2009 that will include mapping and other research in the South China Sea and the Sulu Sulawesi Marine Ecoregion. This pilot would launch their CTI program.

#### CTI Partners Dialogue

¶13. A Partnership Dialogue between the CT6 and the U.S. and Australian governments, multilateral agencies and international NGOs followed the CTI Summit and was attended by Ministers and senior officials. The discussion focused on the need to support the CT6 priorities in their regional and national plans, to develop appropriate funding mechanisms, and to establish and enhance effective coordination and communication (centered on the Regional Secretariat) between -- and among -- CT6 countries and partners. Australia also announced its "down payment" of \$2 million in support of CTI, focusing on Indonesia and Papua New Guinea.

#### Next Steps

¶14. The CT6 laid out a number of next steps. Each country would launch their respective NCC (with defined resources); each NCC would move towards full operations, including the implementation of NPoAs; the interim Regional Secretariat would continue to function

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pending a decision on the location of the permanent Secretariat; and each country would formally adopt the CTI as national policy by August 2009.

¶15. Between August and early October, the three working groups for Coordination Mechanisms, Financial Resources and Monitoring and Evaluation will prepare for and meet in conjunction with the Fourth CTI Senior Officials Meeting (SOM4) in order to formulate and decide on key recommendations. This will be followed by a Second CTI Ministerial Meeting to finalize recommendations and decisions from SOM4 and to prepare for the Copenhagen Climate Change Conference in December.

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